

Trail Talk

Conasauga Ranger District

April - May 2011



"Touch the earth, love the earth, honor the earth: her plains, her valleys, her hills, and her seas; rest your spirit in her solitary places."

---Henry Beston



National Trails Day 2011

As the American Hiking Society celebrated its 19th year of the National Trails Day event, so too did Team Conasauga. Was it hot that day? It surely was, but that didn't slow us down as you tackled some heavy duty maintenance needs on the Sumac Creek Trail, South Fork Trail, and the Jacks River Fields Trailhead/Campground.



Backcountry Horsemen of North Georgia at Jacks River Fields Campground

Thank you volunteers...you make it happen!





April 2011 - BCHNG members **Martha Fillingham, Shane O'Neal and Bryan Roper** began the month riding their horses down the Beech Bottom Trail picking up garbage along the trail and around the Jacks River Falls area...a re-scheduled volunteer workday saw some of the core volunteers come out for the workday, including **Jim Bishop, Troy Brown, Wanda Brown, Amos Burrell,**

Charlie Crider and Gail Milner, to work on cutting out blow downs and maintaining water bars on the Rough Ridge Trail...**Jim McGarvey and Cindy Mitchell** spent a couple of days early this month performing trail work on sections of the Pinhoti Trail...the best in the biz when it comes to blow downs saw both **Troy and Wanda Brown** tackle quite a few trees on the Conasauga River Trail...BMTA members **Walter Cook and George Owen** did some trail maintenance on two sections of the Benton MacKaye Trail...a large contingent of EMBA members, **Justin Davenport, Andrew Gates, Barry Gilley, Jeff Harris, Justin Hurd, Dan Malkalski, Mike Palmeri, and Rob Palmeri** brought out their chainsaws to clear away many blow downs across the popular bike trail at Bear Creek...our trusty volunteer on the west side, **Fred Pilcher,** does his part to keep things in good shape picking up garbage in the Pilchers Pond, Johns Mtn Overlook, and Pocket Picnic areas...the regularly scheduled volunteer workday for April was a huge success despite a low volunteer turnout for the Penitentiary Branch Trail where 90+ water bars were maintained. Those who came out and supported the cause were **Jim Bishop, Tannis Blackwell, Tom Blackwell, Troy Brown, Wanda Brown, Amos Burrell, Robbie Edmondson, Robert Edmondson, and Tom Owens**...our Beech Bottom and Jacks River Falls patrol volunteer, **Mark Voykovic,** checked the area for any garbage, made sure nobody was illegally camping, and spread the LNT principles to hikers and campers...**Junior Kyle, Lakota Towe, and Melinda Towe** of BCHNG spent some time cleaning up Jacks River Fields CG and then patrolling the South Fork Trail with their horses...**Troy and Wanda Brown** had crosscut saw fever again as they took on the Emery Creek Trail to remove the blow downs from beginning to end...the nine enthusiastic people who turned out for this year's chainsaw class so they could be properly trained and receive a FS certification were **Ali Ansari, David Blound, Jim Holland, Marion McLean, Michael O'Brien, Melinda Towe, Rich Vigue, and Tim Woody**...the ever diligent, **Wanda Brown,** continues to keep good records of the volunteer hours so that nobody gets missed...SORBA members, **Mike Palmeri, Terry Palmeri, Gail Kirkman, and Todd Lyons** cut away blow downs on Pinhoti Trail sections 2 & 3...**Tim Woody** returned to Lake Conasauga to begin another season hosting at the campground...and finally, no big surprise, **Troy and Wanda Brown** closed out the month by doing what they do best, crosscutting blow downs, this time on Hickory Creek



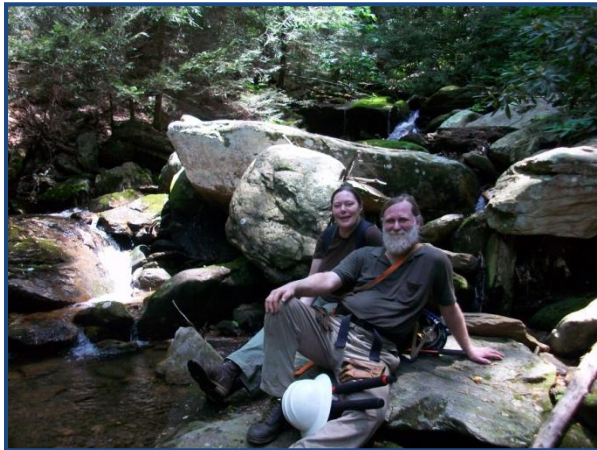
**Robert & Robbie Edmondson,
Penitentiary Branch Trail**



**Penitentiary receives some "trail loving
care!"**

Trail...a super effort of **609 hours** was garnered for the month!!! Thank you volunteers for your continued support of the CDTV program.

May 2011 - BMTA member, **John Franetic**, put in a good hard day's worth of trail work on a section of the Benton MacKaye Trail...loving the sweat that rolls off their brow when it comes to crosscut saw work, **Troy and Wanda Brown** went back to the Hickory Creek trail to remove even more blow downs...**Jim Bishop, Bob Korch, Tom Owens and Wanda Brown** had the all important assignment of working diligently to secure a grant for the CDTV...several people who turned out to keep their CPR/First Aid training up-to-date were **Jim Bishop, Jim McGarvey, Mike O'Brien, and Wanda Brown**...our trusty volunteer veteran, **Fred Pilcher**, was hard at it this month mowing Pilcher's Pond area, picking up trash at several of our recreation sites, and painting the overlook decking at John's Mtn...out on the East Cowpen Trail, **Troy and Wanda Brown**, put in a long day removing blow downs from across the trail...**Larry Rice, Nathan Rice, Stacey Rice, and Stephanie Rice**, members of the BMTA performed trail maintenance on a section of the Benton MacKaye Trail...Working Weekend #60 saw a good turnout of our volunteer work force in support of our trails...those that came out and maintained water bars, trimmed brush, and crosscut sawed blow downs on the upper end of Hickory Creek and lower



Thomas & Jean Puett, Panther Creek Trail

end of Panther Creek Trails were **Jim Bishop, Troy Brown, Wanda Brown, Amos Burrell, Charlie Crider, Hugh McArthur, Gail Milner, Wayne Pattillo, Mike Tedder, Tannis Blackwell, Tom Blackwell, Tom Owens, Jean Puett, Thomas Puett, and Jeremiah Ridley**...keeping an ever watchful presence in the Beech Bottom and Jacks River Falls area of the Cohutta Wilderness, **Mark Voykovic**, bringing family members **Abigail and Matt Voykovic** along with him, made two trips this month making sure

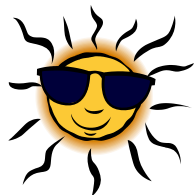
hikers and campers were obeying the rules and regulations and advising folks of Leave No

Trace...a big thanks goes out to **Jeff Krivo** who is the web-master of the new and improved CDTV website and has put in many hours to keep information fresh and up-to-date...BMTA member, **George Owen** put in some much needed trail maintenance on several sections of the Benton MacKaye Trail...**Glenn Kirkland** began his second season hosting at The Pocket campground, while **Tim Woody** kept the home fires burning at Lake Conasauga...lastly, **Wanda Brown** took the time to administer the database, compiling volunteer information for data entry...a solid performance this month of **781 hours** was attained from the best volunteers around!!! A big THANKS to all who contributed to the cause.



Dry Creek Trails – Open for Business

A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the 26-mile Dry Creek Trail System was held recently to celebrate the grand opening of this newest trail system on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest. After several years of planning, the new trails were built to replace many miles of user-created trails with a trail system that is safer, more maintainable, and ecologically sustainable. Over \$448,000 in Recovery Act monies funded the final design, permits and construction providing a new opportunity for horseback riders, mountain bikers and hikers. According to Forest Supervisor George Bain, “the success of this large trails project would not have been possible were it not for this funding and the strong involvement of our partners, the Georgia Pinhoti Trail Association (GPTA), the Back Country Horsemen of North Georgia (BCHNG) and Northwest Georgia (BCHNWG), the Northwest Georgia Chapter of the Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association (NWGA SORBA), and others. This partnership is a perfect example of the collaboration the Forest is striving for in the management of its trails program.” Larry Wheat was singularly recognized for his outstanding contributions to both the planning and layout of the system. Guided horse back rides and bicycle rides were offered and refreshments were provided by the named partner organizations, and served by the Cherokee County Saddle Club. Dry Creek is located about 7 miles south of Villanow, GA on East Armuchee Road (County Road 705).



5 Spots Commonly Missed when Applying Sunscreen

You know your SPF numbers like you know your phone numbers, you can recite the difference between UVA and UVB rays like some people rattle off dinner orders, and you know exactly how many minutes should go by before you reapply--in other words, you are a true sunscreen guru. But even the most knowledgeable and diligent sunscreen users can come home from a day in the great outdoors with burnt skin in certain places. What spots do we tend to miss when we're slathering ourselves with SPF?

1. Scalp

If you're bald, you may have learned the hard way that you need to put on a hat or put sunscreen on your head. People with hair may think that their head is protected, but it's not. Whether you have thinning hair or thick, luscious locks, the sun will find its way to your scalp. If you're not wearing a hat, you need to apply sunscreen. Sunscreen in the hair may sound like a beauty queen's worst nightmare, but you can still look pretty fashionable if you seek out a gel or spray sunscreen. Pay special attention to any bald spots or parts in your hair, particularly if you're sporting braids. It's important to show your scalp some sunscreen love because according to a 2008 study in the Archives of Dermatology, melanoma on the scalp and the neck

results in much quicker death than melanoma that appears elsewhere on the body. That may be due to how melanoma cells form and spread in those areas, as well as the fact that hair can hide the damage and prohibit early detection. In the long run, it's better to sacrifice your style and put some SPF on your scalp.

2. Ears

Sometimes when we apply sunscreen to our face, we focus on the stuff in the center -- the nose, cheeks and forehead. Less sunscreen makes it to the sides of our face or to our ears. And if you count on the brim of a baseball cap to protect your face, your ears are left exposed to the sun. Men with short hair or women who wear their hair up are particularly at risk for an ear burn. Even if you manage to dab your lobes with sunscreen, you're likely not giving your ears the attention they deserve. Skin cancer cells appear on all parts of the ear, including in the rims and bowls that may seem to be protected from the sun. The ear has a pretty complicated structure, with lots of crevices and grooves, but you just need a few extra minutes to apply enough sunscreen to protect your ears.

3. Hands

Whoa, whoa, whoa---if you apply sunscreen at all, then surely the hands must be protected, right? Well, your palms and fingers may have the remnants of sunscreen, but people may not remember to apply sunscreen to the tops of their hands. If you're headed out for the golf course or garden, you may wear gloves at first but eventually remove them, leaving your hands exposed while the rest of your body is sunscreen-protected. Hands already spend way more time in the sun than other body parts. Not only does this constant exposure put a person at risk for developing skin cancer, your hands will start to look unsightly. The presence and appearance of age spots are exacerbated by the sun, and UV rays can damage the fingernails.

4. Feet

In a 2004 study performed in Europe, volunteers at a beach were provided with sunscreen and told they'd be evaluated on how well they used sunscreen. Even though volunteers had every reason to be diligent about sunscreen application, researchers found that the participants rarely applied the product to the tops of their feet. When asked why, 50 percent of the participants said they didn't want sand to stick to their feet. While the sensation may be unpleasant, our feet are just as at risk for skin cancer as the rest of our body. According to the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons, skin cancer on the foot often goes unnoticed because people don't check their feet as diligently as they check other body parts. Lessen your risk for skin cancer and flip-flop tans: apply sunscreen to your feet.

5. Behind the Knees

When we apply sunscreen, we tend to go part by part. First, we'll do the shoulders, then the upper arms, then the lower arms. Unfortunately, some parts, like the crook of the elbow, get left out because they're in a sort of no-man's-land. That's probably why so many people forget to lather up the back of the knee. You may apply sunscreen to your lower leg, knee and thigh, but the back of the knee routinely gets snubbed. This is especially apt to happen if you apply sunscreen to your legs while you're sitting--if your leg is bent, you may not realize you haven't covered that crease. But once you flip over to sun your back, the skin is exposed to the sun. A burn behind the knee makes it uncomfortable to walk, so give this part of the leg the attention it deserves. (Source: Discovery Health, www.DiscoveryHealth.com)



THE FIGHT CONTINUES...

The fight to save select stands of the eastern and Carolina hemlock from the devastation caused by the hemlock woolly adelgid insect continues on national forest lands across north Georgia. This year's treatment schedule is nearly complete with hemlock stands treated in the following areas: mouth of Rough Creek to Penitentiary Branch, The end of Forest System Road (FSR) 126 west of the Jones Settlement, end of the Cashes Valley Road, Emery Creek drainage, Lake Conasauga Recreation Area, and east of Lackey Knob Road, FSR 630C. A special treatment on the Beech Bottom Trail (near the old culvert washout) is planned soon for three huge hemlocks we want to save, a 50 inch and two 40 inchers. The treatment, in wilderness, involves burying insecticide encased in plastic spheres in a circle around the base of the tree. It's working!



CONASAUGA BITS AND PIECES



Welcome David Cohen, our newest Wilderness Ranger. You will probably run into David out on the trail sometime this summer as he will be performing foot patrols in the Cohutta Wilderness, concentrating on public education and awareness in the Beech Bottom/Jacks River Falls Area. David is an employee of the Wilderness Society, working through the Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewardship (SAWS) program. He will be alternating his time between the Conasauga and Blue Ridge Ranger Districts through at least October.

Congratulations to Jim Holland for the Certificate of Appreciation award he received recently from Regional Saw Program Coordinator Dan Peterson in recognition of Jim's valuable contributions to the Saw Safety program on the Southern and Eastern Region National Forests.

Thanks (?) to Tom Blackwell for his report that the pedometer he was wearing on the Panther Creek Trail volunteer workday (in May) recorded 51,824 steps. Tom stated, "No wonder it seemed like a long way!" As if we didn't know...

Trailhead signs to recruit volunteers. A trailhead sign used by the Friends of Allegheny Wilderness (Pennsylvania) to recruit volunteers is being used to develop a similar Team Conasauga recruitment sign to be used at trailheads across the District. Thanks to Jim Bishop for forwarding the information to us.

WWW.Wilderness.Net Everything you ever wanted to know about wilderness and wilderness management can be found on this website. Check it out.





MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

- **July 16**

Emery Creek Trail – trimming/slingblading, water bar/dip maintenance, tread repair. Meet at the Ball Field Group Camping Area at 9:00 am.



- **August 19 - 20**

Working Weekend #61. Tearbritches Trail / Chestnut Lead Trail – trimming/slingblading

- **September 17**

Sumac Creek Trail – trimming/slingblading. We return to Sumac Creek to complete the maintenance we began on National Trails Day. Equestrians needed.

- **October 15**

Annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic and Awards Ceremony

- **November 18 - 19**

Working Weekend #62. TBD

If you are interested, please contact Ed at 706-695-6736 x 118 or e-mail elang@fs.fed.us

Note: In addition to these scheduled workdays, we are trying to find some volunteers who are interested in working independently or with a small group to tackle smaller projects such as these: Complete trimming of lower Panther Creek Trail, complete trimming of lower Hickory Ridge Trail, remove (3) blow downs from Horseshoe Bend Trail





Lots of great effort put forth everywhere!



Thanks to a wonderful team of volunteers!

